

September 9, 2004

Opening Statement by Congressman Paul E. Gillmor  
House Financial Services Committee  
Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance and Government Sponsored Enterprises  
Hearing entitled, "G.I. Finances: Protecting Those Who Protect Us"

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling this hearing and for your important leadership on this issue. I am interested to learn more today regarding the recent allegations in media reports of questionable tactics and abusive sales practices utilized on military bases to sell insurance and investment products.

I share the concern of many of my colleagues regarding claims that Department of Defense (DoD) directives prohibiting the solicitation of recruits, trainees, and transient personnel in a "mass" or "captive" audience, using misleading advertising and sales literature, or giving the appearance that the DoD endorses any particular company are being violated.

I look forward to hearing from our industry witnesses this morning on their sales practices to military personnel and the particulars of their products specifically designed to meet the needs of our military servicemen and women. I also anticipate a full discussion regarding ways to improve the delivery of financial products to both active duty and reserve military personnel addressing their special circumstances and making sure they are adequately protected from fraudulent or abusive practices.

These men and women are fulfilling their duty to our nation by putting their lives at risk to protect our freedoms. It is clearly our duty to make sure they are being treated fairly.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for calling this important hearing and I look forward to an informative discussion.